Miscellany.

FOR THE CENTINEL.

[The following Essay was wrote and published immediately after the great fire, March 20, 1760, and is now republished as applicable to the late Conflagration.]

THE uncertainty of human life, the transitory nature and continual vicissitudes of this present state of being and of all enjoyments and possessions in it, are truths so well known to every thoughtful person, and have so often been the subjects of judicious writers in all ages, that the strongest invention can perhaps scarce find any thing new to offer, and a modest Muse with reluctance undertakes the theme: Yet such is the frailty of human nature, that when a sudden Catastrophe surrounds us the mind is flustered and disconcerted, and does not readily collect those reflections suitable to the occasion, or else by having been used to neglect such reflections, from a conception that they must needs flow naturally from such calamities as should produce them, the mind through disuse, may not immediately conceive them when wanted. It is true, the voice of nature has always been the same, is continually sounding, and understood by all; yet strange to say, what we hear the oftenest, we attend to the least, and what we are the most certain of, we give the least heed to; but there are times when good providence sends a louder summons by the struggles of nature, and proclaims those truths, which though they could not operate by the importance of their nature, yet may force their effect by rousing the passions; but here frailty again takes place, from extreme thoughtlessness, the passions being roused, we rush on to confusion and error; like pilots growing careless by a long calm, we steer by the gust of passion, instead of the compass of understanding, heedless of the port of truth, and negligent of those duties to which the passions were only designed to urge us.

To point forth and familiarise these truths, has been the well handled subject of the best writers; but while nature continues to summon, and the wisdom of her voice remains in any measure neglected, the theme cannot be truly exhausted, nor the repetition of it needless.

For these ends, this Essay is presented to the public view, if it pass under the judgment of able minds, they will acquiesce in any truth, and at least may from hence take a hint for nobler thoughts; besides, there is a satisfaction we all feel in giving vent to the throbbings of the bosom, and in collecting to some order, those thoughts which float through the mind on such occasions.

Let this then be the apology; but if still any one should censure me for treading in this unaccustomed path of writing, I must quit the dispute and screen myself beneath the horrors of that never to be forgotten night, when the flames broke loose on our houses, and laid so large a part of our capital in ruins: I am sensible that painted terrors ill-become real sorrow, and are never to be used but when the passions are sluggish; and therefore passing over that ample field for description, which the late unhappy catastrophe affords, shall confine myself to those sober facts which no body should be ignorant of, and with which every body must needs be affected.

It was then in the first watches of the morning, when our bodies were fast fettered with soundest sleep, that the fire was first discovered, and the town alarmed with an out-cry; the inhabitants were speedily collected, and though the fire was found in the cellar of a brick house, yet it soon eat through its prison; the wind blowing fresh urged on the flames, and with surprising fury they ravaged in spite of all opposition or means to suppress them; the cinders and burning ruins were carried to the leewardmost part of the town, by means of which some who thought themselves in no danger, were the soonest consumed, and the inhabitants of them being gathered to assist at the head of the fire, suffered the greatest losses at their own houses; the like evil happened to numbers of tradesmen, whose shops were so quick fuel for the flames, that their tools and stock were all consumed before they could repair to them; in some places we heard the shrieks of mothers and children rouzed from their beds by the surrounding flames, and no man to help; here we might behold the aged, the sick and the bed-rid, whose distance from the seat of the fire gave them hopes of security, driven forth to the inclemencies of the weather, not knowing where to shelter; there we might see those whose least thoughts were placed on their substance, and whose greatest anxiety was to save their lives: Thus raged this fire, forcing its way at the windows of brick houses, whose slated roofs were thought a sufficient defence, thus adding burning to burning, till it left no building unconsumed where the wind would let it pass. The natural horrors of the night added terror to this catastrophe, and at once rendered it more dismal to the eye, more grevious to be born, and more difficult to be supressed, till the odious night wore out, and with it vanished the height of our fears; but not so the reality of our sorrow, the risen sun assuaged the gloom of the night, but gave us a dismal prospect of its havock; a spectacle shocking to sensibility! Like the blasted trees of summer, or the skeleton of some delightful body; yet far less ungrateful to the sight than sorrowful to be reflected on. Take a survey then of these extended ruins, here once lived the loyal subject, the tender father, the obliging friend, and a good commonwealths-man; but their habitations, as with one sweep of a scythe, are all cut off, and they thrown on the charity of their friends: And is this all? Alas there are still more heart-piercing scenes; walk through the ruins, and take a more particular account; here lived the laborious tradesman, on whose daily industry depended the sustenance of a numerous family; there lived one whose circumstances were straitened with poverty, and distressed by sickness; here lived one just emerging from indigence, and reaping the first fruits of honest industry; there lived those whose comfortable circumstances afforded a refuge for the needy, and an habitation for the friendless; here lived those whose subsistence depended on their situation for business; there lived those whose all was in their houses, and here those who are still unhappily answerable for all they lost; there lived, and there was the subsistence of the aged and infirm, whose frugal industry in youth, had procured them the merited support of easy old age, when the body unstrung for labor can no longer support itself—But all cut off, their industry appears no more, and the fatigues of youth overtakes them, when age should be at rest; the children must beg, and the industrious must be dependent, the forehanded repeat his toil anew, and the debtor lay at mercy; the friendless must seek for other patrons, and they who patronized implore compassion; the affluent aged must forget their ease, and too soon lose the benefit of that substance which they could not carry hence.

Amazing shock! Is this the uncertainty of human life? Is it thus we have no abiding place here? Is it thus that the places that knew us shall know us no more? And do riches thus take to themselves wings? what a gust of passion breaks forth in all our minds? yet let us compose our thoughts, attend the voice of reason to those solemn admonitions so loudly proclaimed by this dreadful catastrophe: What a lesson then is here of the uncertainty of earthly enjoyments! We lay ourselves down to our natural rest possessed of subsistence and affluence, and in a few hours we are awakened to take leave of

all. Where shall the miser bestow his hoards, or the extortioner his ill gotten gains, or how shall the worldly man secure his happiness when flames surround them? The huge pillars of smoak which we beheld floating to the sky were at once emblematical of our possessions and declarative of their loss: But what say these mighty ruins? they shew us at how uncertain a tenure we hold our enjoyments, for next under a sovereign providence we seem indebted even to the stability of the wind that it did not vary and roll the flames over the whole town. With how much ease then can we shift the scene and suppose ourselves in the situation of the present distressed; was it our goodness, or vigilance that protected us? And if being destroyed, we should have felt sorrow; being so narrowly saved can we fail to melt with sympathy? and if ever the golden rule was capable of a benevolent application the most insensible must now feel it, and the most hardened put it in practice; and he who on this occasion does not bestow bountifully to the relief of the immediate sufferers, must either flatter himself with some peculiar infallible protection, or being desperate in giddiness, bid a bold defiance to all calamity. Nor can any one, though not immediately exposed to this destruction, or tho' distant from this capital, surmise that they have no part in its general admonition; 'tis nature's voice, that well known herald of the Almighty which tho' it be now uttered here, yet echoes every where; 'tis but one bolt of that amazing scourge, brandished by the hand of vengeance, against a guilty world; the same fire may parch up that land which it does not consume, and earthquakes make its desolation worse than the present; if therefore we are common tenants of a state variegated with joy and sorrow, methinks 'tis natural we should in some measure share the good of it which we all want, seeing we are equally exposed to the evils of it, under which we all desire to be relieved.

O, my soul, what a thought arises! can it with truth be said, that any in human shape, though their daily support were robbery, should lurk for the confusion of a public calamity, and plunder the property of the distressed; or that any after cool deliberation, upon whatsoever pretence, should either publickly or privately discountenance that relief to the distressed which we may all at some time want, and which humanity suggests? forbid it heaven!

Alas, we sojourn in a vale of tears, sorrow on every side surrounds us, and calls for those duties which we feel impressed in our natures, duties so endeliably engraven, that a heathen said, "in nothing do we more imitate the immortal Gods, than in doing acts of kindness," the voice of revelation is still more explicit, and so plain, that he who runs may read. Possessions take to themselves wings; to what purpose is it then, that we distress, perplex and corrupt our minds in getting wealth, the possession of which is so precarious? With what face can we swell with the conceit of riches and assume airs of importance, disdain, oppress, and tyranize over those beneath us (perhaps only) in fortune, when a few hours may set us all on a level? How much does it become us while in affluence to demean ourselves with such honesty, humanity and beneficence, as that if calamity should overtake us, we may stand confessedly the worthy objects of needful relief? Methinks this catastrophe is big with instruction, could any one see the dire havock produced from so small a fire, and not feel the obligations we owe to the community in our economy of this necessary but devouring element, and of every thing that is apt fuel for the same? for as our possessions are not secured by our own single carefulness, the duty therefore becomes general; and may I be permitted to take a hint from this dreadful desolation, and point it forth as an emblem of that destruction, which the passions when let loose produce in human minds; when the first excess is not suppressed, like the late fire they ravage, increase by running, and may destroy every thing valuable in the mind; may entirely strip us of that real treasure which only can stand us in stead when a greater conflagration shall seize this earth, when we shall be as little anxious to save our lives, as many lately were to save their worldly possessions.

(2)

A

DISCOURSE

Occaſioned by the DEATH of

THE HONOURABLE

STEPHEN SEWALL, Eſq;

CHIEF-JUSTICE of the Superiour Court of Judicature, Court of Aſſize, and General-Goal-Delivery; as alſo A Member of His MAJESTY's COUNCIL for the Province of the MASSACHUSETTS-BAY in NEW-ENGLAND:

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE

On Wedneſday-Night, SEPTEMBER 10. 1760.

Ætatis 58.

DELIVERED the LORD's-DAY after his Deceaſe.

By

JONATHAN MAYHEW, D. D.

Paſtor of the Weſt-Church in BOSTON.

"The ſweet remembrance of the JUST
"Shall flouriſh when he ſleeps in duſt."

PSALM CXII. 6.

BOSTON:
Printed by RICHARD DRAPER, in Newbury-Street:
EDES and GILL, in Queen-Street: And
THOMAS and JOHN FLEET, in Cornhill.

MDCCLX.

Sec
F-11, 469.2

A Funeral Diſcourſe.

I SAMUEL XXV. I.

AND SAMUEL died, and all the Iſraelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his houſe at Ramah-----

WOULD to God (if I may ſo expreſs myſelf without ſeeming to blame the ſovereign will and wiſdom) Would to God, I had not ſo melancholy an occaſion as I have, to deſiſt at preſent from the proſecution of that important ſubject, on which I have for ſome time been diſcourſing! But God, who

doeth his will in the armies of heaven, and amongſt the inhabitants of the earth, hath, in his holy and inſcrutable providence, given me this occaſion, by the death of an honorable perſon lately belonging to this ſociety. And altho' I have ever had, rather an averſion to, than any fondneſs for, the common practice of making long encomiums on the dead, conſidering how often they are proſtituted, ſo as to paſs with many people, even when they happen to be juſt, for little or nothing more than words of courſe; yet I thought you would hardly excuſe me, and, indeed, I could not eaſily excuſe myſelf, if I neglected to take a particular notice of the life and death of ſo diſtinguiſhed a perſon as Judge SEWALL; or did not endeavour to lead you into ſome proper reflections on this diſpenſation of divine providence. But in truth, tho' I know not well how to be ſilent on this occaſion; yet, on the other hand, I am ſo deeply touch'd, ſo penetrated hereby, that I hardly know how to ſpeak ------ For alas! one, indeed the far better part of my heart, ſeems torn away from me, while the other is left wounded, panting and bleeding. So that if my diſcourſe ſhould appear broken and unconnected, your candor

dor will, I hope, ſuggeſt ſome apology for me. Whatever I ſhall ſay of this excellent perſon's character, will be the genuine dictate of my heart, not the fruit of ſtudy or invention; for ſorrow, you know, does not aim much at being *correct*, or *methodical*.

I had indeed reaſon to love and honor him as my father; tho', ſo great was the humility and condeſcention of that good man, that had I even call'd him my friend, or brother, I believe he would ſcarcely have been offended at it. And it would be a juſt and great reproach to me, if I did not now ſincerely love and honor his memory; and ſhew ſome public reſpect to it; eſpecially ſince the doing this, by recollecting ſome of his many good qualities, may be a means of exciting us all to imitate his virtues. And ſince the mouth ſpeaketh out of, and according to, "the abundance that is in the heart;" I muſt, in juſtice, forewarn you that my diſcourſe on this occaſion, unleſs my ſpirits and ſtrength ſhould quite fail me, will be conſiderably longer than it is uſual for me to be. But amidſt all my ſorrow, and great heavineſs of heart, I ſhall have at leaſt one conſolation; that of aſſuring myſelf, as I go along, that whatever, almoſt, I may

ſay in honor of this excellent man, none of my auditors will think me exceſſive in his eulogium; but heartily join with me in paying this public regard to his memory; which will be ſome alleviation of my grief.

And, as an introduction to the deſign which has been mentioned, of making ſome reflections on the life, character and death of the worthy perſon lately deceas'd; it ſeems not amiſs to make a few obſervations on the life, character and death of SAMUEL, many years the chief judge and magiſtrate of Iſrael; one of the moſt excellent characters which we meet with amongſt thoſe of the ancient worthies; and therefore, as it is conceived, the more ſuitable to introduce what is propoſed as the main buſineſs of this diſcourſe.

It is not deſigned, however, either to give a large, and very particular account of SAMUEL, or to labour a parallel between theſe two judges: but only to ſelect ſuch parts of the conduct and character of the former of them, as ſeem directly pertinent to the preſent occaſion; or at leaſt, ſuch as may eaſily be accommodated thereto.

We

We have, in effect, a very honorable teſtimony to the worthineſs of SAMUEL's character, in that paſſage of ſacred hiſtory, on which my diſcourſe is grounded; altho' nothing is ſaid therein, directly, or particularly concerning it. When he died, "*all the Iſraelites* were gathered together, and *lamented* him"; attending his funeral rites with the greateſt demonſtrations of grief. The unfeigned tears of an whole people, collected together to ſolemnize the burial of a perſon of his rank and ſtation, are a ſtrong evidence of his ſuperior merit. Eulogiums falling thus from the eyes of a whole people, (if I may ſo expreſs it) falling in unbidden tears; or burſting from the heart in involuntary ſighs; are louder, and more authentic teſtimonies of real worth in the perſon, who is the occaſion of them, than the labour'd praiſes of a thouſand tongues, however eloquent. Such tears, ſuch ſighs, on ſuch an occaſion, reveal the real ſentiments of the ſoul; while a great pomp of words often ſerves to no other purpoſe, than to contradict, or diſguiſe, them. Thus it was that SAMUEL was praiſed when he died; theſe were the panegyrics which all Iſrael beſtow'd on him; or rather, which the remembrance of his virtues, in conjunction with the ſad

ſpectacle

ſpectacle of his venerable remains before their eyes, extorted from them.

But we need not be implicit believers in groans and tears, even in thoſe of an whole nation. For if we look into the hiſtory of SAMUEL, we ſhall eaſily diſcover the grounds of them; and ſee how naturally and juſtly, as well as copiouſly, they burſt forth on that occaſion.

We have a particular account of SAMUEL's birth, and ſome extraordinary circumſtances which both preceeded and followed it, in the firſt chapter of the firſt book, which goes under the name of that eminent perſon. But theſe things are here paſſed over in ſilence, as not material, or indeed pertinent, all of them, to the preſent occaſion. It is intimated to us in the ſecond chapter of that book, how early SAMUEL diſtinguiſhed himſelf, or rather, was diſtinguiſhed by God; and pointed out as a perſon, from whom great things were to be expected in due time. For it is ſaid, "the *child* SAMUEL grew on, "and was in favour both with the "Lord, and alſo with men." * And in the beginning of the third chapter, we read

* Ver. 26.

read of "the *child* SAMUEL's miniſtring "unto the Lord before Eli" the prieſt. So that, even in his tender age, he was a ſervant and miniſter of the Lord; who ſoon after called him to, and honored him with, the ſacred office of a prophet. And it is obſerved of him, towards the latter end of the laſt-mentioned chapter, that he "grew, and the Lord was with him, and "did let none of his words fall to the "ground." †

It will not be impertinent to obſerve here, that in the time of SAMUEL, there were in Iſrael certain academies, or colleges, uſually called the ſchools of the ſons of the prophets; becauſe under the immediate direction and government of the prophets. In theſe, youth were inſtructed in uſeful learning, eſpecially in the knowledge of God's law; and from amongſt them, God uſually raiſed up, and choſe the prophets, which he ſent to his people Iſrael. Nor is there any reaſon to doubt, but that SAMUEL had his education in one of theſe ſchools. For one of them, named *Naioth*, was in the city of Ramah,* the place of SAMUEL's birth, where his father lived, where he himſelf was

† Ver. 19. * Vid. 1 Sam. XIX. 19, 22, and 23.

was brought up from a child, where his own houſe was afterwards, where he commonly lived, and where he was buried. And we are particularly informed, [1 Sam. XIX chap.] that during the troubles, and public commotions, occaſioned by Saul's perſecuting David, Saul's meſſengers being ſent in purſuit of David to *Naioth*, "ſaw "the company of the prophets propheſy-"ing, and SAMUEL ſtanding as *appointed* "*over them;*" † he being at this time advanced in years. Now, conſidering the cuſtom of thoſe days, and that *Naioth*, that truly *illuſtrious ſchool*, was in Ramah, where SAMUEL was born and brought up; and that he was afterwards himſelf appointed an inſtructor and governor therein; there ſeems to be no room to doubt, but that he had his education in it in his youth; tho' I do not remember, indeed, that this is any where particularly aſſerted.

But to return: After SAMUEL had been ſome time cloathed with the ſacred character of a prophet, when he was about thirty or forty years of age, he was inveſted with an high civil office; that of judge, or the chief magiſtrate in Iſrael. For in thoſe days, before the introduction of monarchical

† Ver. 20.

narchical government, the ſupreme civil ruler in Iſrael was ſtiled a judge, or the judge. In the execution of which office, SAMUEL uſed to travel from one part of the country to another, holding his courts, and diſtributing juſtice to the people, in the moſt convenient places; and then returning to Ramah: which, even in thoſe days, was called going in "circuit". Of theſe facts we are informed 1 Sam. chap. VII. *Viz.* that SAMUEL "went from year to year in "circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh; "and judged Iſrael in all thoſe places. "And his return was to Ramah; for there "was his houſe: and there he built an altar "unto the Lord.‡" And we are informed in the ſame chapter, that he thus judged "Iſrael all the days of his life. *" From which latter circumſtance, as well as from other things, we learn, that SAMUEL held the office of a judge in Iſrael, when he was no longer the chief ruler therein, under king Saul, when the form of government was changed. For SAMUEL was the perſon chiefly concerned, and employed, under God, in raiſing Saul to the throne of Iſrael; as appears from the particular account of theſe matters in ſacred writ. At preſent I paſs them over with a bare men-

‡ Ver. 16, 17. * Ver. 15.

mention. I alſo paſs over, even without a mention, many ſignal ſervices which SAMUEL did to the people of Iſrael; and many bleſſings which he was inſtrumental of procuring for them from heaven.

This renowned man appears to have been an excellent patriot; one of the greateſt and beſt that the world has known. He intirely loved his country; and was ever properly jealous for its laws and liberties. He not only exerted himſelf ſucceſsfully in their defence againſt foreign enemies; but did whatever lay in his power to ſecure them againſt the equally, or more dangerous efforts of ambition, intrigue, and tyranny within. His great zeal for the laws, rights and liberties of the people, appears not only from his ſteady and upright conduct in the capacity of a judge, of which more particularly hereafter; but from his behaviour upon ſome very ſignal occaſions, which ſhould not be intirely omitted here.

When the people were diſguſted, not without ſufficient reaſon, at the conduct of two of SAMUEL's ſons, and doubtleſs had their paſſions blown up by ſome evil-minded perſons, deſirous of novelty and change;

change; they manifeſted themſelves weary of the free and excellent form of government, which God himſelf had inſtituted amongſt them; they required a change therein, and requeſted SAMUEL to ſet a king, or abſolute monarch, over them, "like "all the nations §" about them. SAMUEL earneſtly expoſtulated with them on the ſubject of this mad propoſal; not for his own ſake, leſt his power ſhould be diminiſhed, but becauſe he foreſaw the evils, the oppreſſions, and the grievous ſlavery, they would bring upon themſelves by ſuch a change of government. But having "proteſted ſolemnly unto them, and ſhew-"ed them the manner of the king"; and when nothing elſe would appeaſe them, he gave way to their importunate clamours; he "hearkened to their voice," and anointed Saul to be their king, according to the divine direction. For it ſeems that God himſelf would not preſerve them a free people, againſt their own will; and therefore "gave them a king in his anger;" to ſcourge them for their folly, and for their rebellion againſt himſelf. However, at length, when SAMUEL's prediction had, doubtleſs, been ſufficiently verified, and Saul's reign was grown inſupportable, SAMUEL

§ Vid. 1 Sam. VIII. at large.

SAMUEL was a principal inſtrument of ſetting him aſide; and he anointed David the ſon of Jeſſe, a man after God's own heart, to ſit upon the throne of Iſrael in his ſtead. Now amidſt all this madneſs of the people, theſe turns and revolutions of government, SAMUEL ſtill diſcovered himſelf to be a true patriot, zealous for the liberties and intereſts of his country: Equally ſo, in diſcountenancing, and entering his proteſtation againſt, their firſt demand of a king; in complying therewith when nothing elſe would ſatisfy them; in ſetting aſide their king, when his behaviour became intolerable; and anointing a far better man to reign in his ſtead. All which, it muſt be remembred, SAMUEL did, not without the particular permiſſion and direction of heaven; as appears at large from the remarkable hiſtory of theſe tranſactions.

It may not be amiſs to obſerve farther here, that while Saul ſat upon the throne, SAMUEL did not only continue in the executive office of a judge in Iſrael; but was, at leaſt for a time, one of his chief counſellors. We read of his giving him advice from time to time; and freely reproving him for his faults: Tho' he adhered to him

him, till God ſignified his intention to deſtroy him for his bad behaviour. After which, SAMUEL renounced him, anointed David, adhered to him and his cauſe; and was his chief adviſer and counſellor, as long as he [SAMUEL] lived.

But having juſt obſerved theſe things, it is now time to ſpeak more particularly of SAMUEL's integrity in the capacity of a judge: For this is the character under which he is more commonly conſidered. And to his fidelity in this important truſt, we have one very authentic, indeed a very ſingular, teſtimony, in ſacred hiſtory; one, which is ſo full, that it will ſuperſede the occaſion, at leaſt the neceſſity, for any others. It is in the 12th chapter of that book which has been ſo often mentioned already, at the beginning. It appears from the laſt verſe of the foregoing chapter, that all the people were gathered together at Gilgal, to confirm the kingdom to Saul, and to eſtabliſh him in the throne of Iſrael; he having been before anointed king by SAMUEL. And they being thus gathered together, SAMUEL, already grown old in their ſervice, took this moſt public, and ſolemn occaſion, to appeal to their own conſciences for

for the uprightneſs of all his conduct towards them; when he alſo challenged all, or any of them, to bear witneſs againſt him before the Lord, and before Saul his anointed, who had now power to puniſh him, if they could alledge any thing againſt him.

There is at once ſuch a noble boldneſs, ſuch a ſimplicity, and ſuch a dignity, in this appeal and challenge of SAMUEL, that I queſtion whether the repetition of it at large, will ſeem tedious on this occaſion, to any who have a true taſte and judgment: I rather think it will be agreeable and entertaining. It is as follows: "Be- "hold, I have hearkned to your voice in "all that ye have ſaid unto me, and have "made a king over you. And now be- "hold the king walketh before you: "and I am old, and gray-headed; and "behold, my ſons are with you; and I "have walked before you from my child- "hood to this day. Behold, here I am, "witneſs againſt me before the Lord, "and before his anointed. Whoſe ox "have I taken? or whoſe aſs have I ta- "ken? or whom have I defrauded? "whom have I oppreſſed? or of whoſe "hand have I received any bribe to blind "mine

" mine eyes therewith? and I will reſtore " it to you *." We may ſee, in this challenge, that inimitable kind of boldneſs which a good conſcience inſpires; ſuch a boldneſs, as ſurpaſſes all the power of art, and the deepeſt hypocriſy, to counterfeit ſo exactly, but that ſome difference might be diſcovered by a penetrating eye. And you will be pleaſed to obſerve, that this appeal and demand are general. Tho' SAMUEL here ſpeaks with particular reference to his conduct in the capacity of a judge; yet he refers the people to his manner of life in general, even from his childhood to that day. His demand extends to his whole conduct towards them. He does not only acquit himſelf of corruption, or receiving bribes; but, " Whom " have I defrauded?" ſays he; " Whom " have I oppreſſed?" i. e. in any reſpect whatever, from my youth to old age, notwithſtanding my opportunity and power to oppreſs, in the high ſtation which I have filled? Let my accuſer now ſtand forth; and freely bear witneſs againſt me before God and the king. This is the evident purport of his words.

Alas!

* 1 Sam. XII. 1, 2, 3.

Alas! how few judges, or other perſons in high ſtations, wherein they have opportunity to oppreſs, and to do iniquity, are there in moſt countries, who would dare to make the like demand in the face of a whole people? Or, if they preſumed to do ſo, how many mouths would, probably, be at once opened againſt them, to teſtify their iniquity to their faces, before God and the king?----I ſay, "in moſt countries;" for I would, by no means, be ſuppoſed to ſpeak thus of all without exception; which might be a very injurious reflection; and, at beſt, a great indecency. ----But was there a tongue in the whole congregation of Iſrael, tho' there were doubtleſs many falſe and unruly ones therein----Was there a tongue, ſo intemperate and ſlanderous, as to liſp a word againſt SAMUEL, or his integrity? No! All the people anſwered as one man, "Thou "haſt not defrauded us, nor oppreſſed us, "neither haſt thou taken ought of any "man's hand. And he ſaid unto them, "The Lord is witneſs againſt you, and his "anointed is witneſs this day, that ye have "not found ought in my hand. And they "anſwered, He is witneſs." * ----O happy! O venerable man! ſo long the chief judge and

* Ver. 4, 5.

and magiſtrate in Iſrael, with ſo much opportunity and power to do iniquity; yet ſteady in the practice of all righteouſneſs, till thy reverend head was covered with the ſnow of age; and then approved by the united voice of thy own conſcience, thy country, and thy God!—Happy, venerable SAMUEL!—

It might naturally have been expected, that at the death and burial of ſuch a judge, ſuch a patriot in Ramah, there would be "a voice heard, lamentation "and weeping, and great mourning, [like that of] "Rachel weeping for her chil-"dren", when ſhe "would not be com-"forted *": Or like that, when the bloody tyrant, Herod, commanded the children to be ſlain. It would have been indeed ſtrange, if all Iſrael had not lamented when SAMUEL died; when they were aſſembled to bury him, and his venerable remains were before their eyes, to be repoſited in the ſilent tomb, not to awake till the laſt day; tho' then to ariſe all glorious, "mortality being ſwallowed up of "victory!"

* Matt. II. 16. 17. 18. Rama and Ramah were the ſame city.

Their lamenting him thus, was but the natural conſequence of that high and juſt veneration which they had for him while living; which was ſo great, that on a certain occaſion we find it expreſſed in the very remarkable manner following: All the people greatly feared the LORD " and SAMUEL. † " And let me here juſt remind you of two or three other paſſages, wherein he is mentioned with the higheſt honor, in company with the moſt renowned perſons of antiquity. So in Pſalm XCIX. " Moſes and Aaron among the prieſts, " and SAMUEL among them that call up- " on his name ". And in Jeremiah XV, at the beginning, God ſeems to expreſs his anger againſt his people for their iniquities in the ſtrongeſt manner poſſible, almoſt, by ſaying, that " though Moſes " and SAMUEL ſtood before him ", [as interceſſors for them] " yet his mind " could not be towards this people: Caſt " them out of my ſight, and let them go--! Thus alſo SAMUEL is mentioned, Hebrews XI, amongſt thoſe, " of whom the world was not worthy. "—" The time would " fail me," ſays the apoſtle, " to tell of Gi- " deon, and of Barak, and of Sampſon, " and of Jepthae, of David alſo and " of SAMUEL;—who thro' faith ſubdued " kingdoms,

† Sam. XII. 18.

" kingdoms, wrought righteouſneſs, &c." Theſe all obtained a good report thro' faith; and died therein; even in the hope of " obtaining a better reſurrection."

BUT it is time for us to make a tranſition (indeed a very eaſy one) from SAMUEL, the renowned judge of Iſrael, to that moſt worthy judge, whom the laſt evening we attended to " the houſe appointed for all the living "; at leaſt, whatever was mortal of him.— And ſince, upon ſimilar occaſions, people uſually expect ſome ſhort hiſtorical account of the deceaſed, eſpecially if a perſon of ſuch eminence; rather than diſappoint any, I will begin with a few words concerning the birth and parentage of this excellent perſon; tho' theſe are matters of much leſs importance than moſt others which I have to ſay of him; and which, in the mean time, are preſſing, as it were, to be the foremoſt.

The late chief juſtice SEWALL was *honorably deſcended*; to uſe a common phraſe, tho' one hardly applicable, in ſtrictneſs, to any of the degenerate race of mankind. He was of a family of diſtinction in New-

England. Nor was he the first of the name of SEWALL, who sustained the same titles and offices. The honorable SAMUEL SEWALL, Esq; his uncle, had before for many years, been chief justice of the province, and a member of his majesty's council; a gentleman, eminent in his day for his learning, piety, and great probity. † The father of the late judge SEWALL, was STEPHEN SEWALL, Esq; of *Salem*; on all accounts a very worthy, respectable gentleman; and universally so esteemed in his time *. His mother was a daughter of the Rev'd and celebrated Mr. JONATHAN MITCHEL, pastor of the church in *Cambridge*; a gentlewoman of great virtues, and uncommon accomplishments. His parents were blest with seventeen children; divers of whom, besides the late judge, were persons of distinction, and of great worth in public life. § He was the youngest

† Since delivering this discourse, the author has been informed that the late Rev. Mr. *Prince* chose the character of *Samuel* to be the ground of his funeral sermon on that venerable gentleman; which discourse was published: but which the author of this, has not, so far as he remembers, had the pleasure of reading.

* He was the county-register, a very noted justice of the peace a major in the militia, and captain of the fort at *Salem*: all which posts he sustained with great reputation and honor.

§ Particularly the late Major *Samuel Sewall*, Esq; of *Boston*, and *Mitchel Sewall*, Esq; late of *Salem*.

youngeſt, except one, of many brethren; and was born in *December* 1702. Being duly prepared, he was admitted into Harvard-College in *Cambridge*, in the year 1717, when he was in the 15th year of his age.

He was a "plant of renown" in that ſeminary of learning, even from the time of his being tranſplanted into it from an inferior ſchool. He was early diſtinguiſhed by the ſprightlineſs and brillancy of his genius, and by the rapid progreſs which he made in academical learning: which, in conjunction with an agreeable perſon, a chearful, affable diſpoſition, and ſingular delicacy of manners, render'd him at once the delight, and the admiration, of that ſociety. And altho' he was, of the two, rather of a gay than of a grave turn, yet this was never indulged to exceſs; but always reſtrained within the rules of virtue, and a ſtrict decorum. His morals were ſtill unblemiſhed; and his life, not only inoffenſive, but exemplary. This is not ſaid at random, or as a thing of courſe; but upon the authority of thoſe who were cotemporary with him in that ſociety. So that there is reaſon to think, he truly feared God from his youth.

On

On his leaving that ſchool of the ſons of the prophets, ſoon after receiving the firſt public honors of it at the uſual time, anno 1721, when he was conſider'd as one of the brighteſt ſcholars it had ever produced, he took up his reſidence in one of our ſea-port towns*. Here his fine talents were for ſome time very uſefully, tho' humbly employed, in keeping a ſchool. For, beſides that his patrimony could not be great, as may eaſily be ſuppoſed, he never thought himſelf above doing any thing, by which he might be ſerviceable in the world. And he was in high eſteem amongſt the gentlemen of that town; who, as all wiſe and good men have ever done, conſidered rather the perſon and his accompliſhments, than the ſphere in which he acted.

However, at the expiration of about three or four years (for I do not exactly know the time) he returned to *Cambridge*, and betook himſelf to a collegiate life; where he purſued his ſtudies with great ſucceſs, and a growing fame: For while he was thus a ſtudent at the college, he was eſteemed one principal ornament and honor to it.

After

* *Marblehead.*

After reſiding therein a ſuitable time; and when, beſides other very valuable acquirements in the literary way, he had made great proficiency in ſacred learning, and the ſtudy of theology, he became a preacher of the goſpel, miniſtring before the Lord and his people; tho' not while "a child," as SAMUEL did, and as ſome others ſince, without SAMUEL's extraordinary call, or qualifications, have preſumed to do.—It were almoſt needleſs to obſerve, that his public performances as a preacher of the goſpel, were truly excellent: For ſuch a genius, ſo cultivated and matur'd, join'd with a good, devout and warm heart, like his, could, certainly, produce nothing but what was ſo. He was, without doubt, one of the moſt accompliſh'd preachers of his time; and was acknowledg'd as ſuch by all competent and unprejudiced judges, eſpecially by the beſt. It was indeed his felicity in every ſtation and capacity, a felicity almoſt peculiar to him, to be moſt eſteem'd and honor'd by the wiſeſt and worthieſt men, while all others, even the common people, could not but ſee and acknowledge his ſuperior merit.

He was at length, upon a vacancy, in the year 1728, choſen a tutor of the college,

lege, where he was ſtill a reſident: A ſtation, for which his talents were uncommonly adaped; and which he continued to fill ſeveral years, without laying aſide that ſacred employment wherein he had before been engaged. However, after ſome time, he laid that wholly aſide; devoting himſelf to the diſcharge of his truſt as a tutor of the college. And, as may eaſily be concluded, he, who was ſo bright an ornament of that learned ſociety, even during the time of his own pupillage, and before his years of puberty were paſt, ſhone with a very diſtinguiſh'd luſtre in the capacity of one of the governors and inſtructors of it; when he had attained to ſuch a maturity of age; when he had been all along adding to his great ſtock of learning and knowledge, and had alſo gained conſiderable experience. †

His genius and talents, as before obſerved, were wonderfully adapted to this employment. And it was in this capacity, that ſome of his excellent endowments, both natural and acquired, appeared to more advantage than they had ever done, or could, in any other, wherein he had acted before. It was in this ſtation, that his

† Ætat 26.

his learning, before indeed well known, became ſtill more conſpicuous; and not only his learning, but his great happineſs and facility in teaching, and communicating knowledge: Both, now diſplay'd themſelves to the full, there being proper ſcope for them; while he took a pleaſure, not in an oſtentatious diſcovery of his own ſuperior talents, but in making them uſeful to others. It was in this capacity, that his admirable ſpirit of government became manifeſt to all. It was in this capacity, that his exquiſite prudence and diſcretion became more apparent, by his manner of conducting towards the youth of that ſociety, in the happieſt medium between too much auſterity and rigor on one hand, and remiſſneſs, or familiarity, on the other. In this ſtation he, at leaſt continued to diſcover a great, inviolable regard, to religion and virtue. I ſay, "at leaſt continued" to do ſo; becauſe it was, perhaps, hardly poſſible to diſcover that particular quality in this ſtation, more plainly than he had done before. However, he now made it one principal part of his care, to guard his pupils againſt the ſnares of vice; and to form their minds, as far as this was in the power of man, to the love of piety and virtue. In doing which, he neglect-

ed

ed neither the moſt kind, ſerious and pathetic counſels on one hand, nor the exerciſe of his authority on the other, whenever there was a proper occaſion and call to employ it. In this ſtation he ſhew'd, in a way almoſt peculiar to himſelf, how conſiſtent the moſt reſolute and vigorous exertion of authority is with the moſt courteous, condeſcending temper of mind, and the moſt gentle, complacent manners. For I believe he had hardly a pupil ſo abandon'd, as not at once to love him as his beſt friend, and to revere him as a father; I had almoſt ſaid, as his guardian angel! Vice turn'd pale, trembled, and fled at his frown; or even at the caſt of his countenance without one. Virtue approach'd, exulted, and was improved at his ſmile: while learning and arts flouriſh'd under his eye in that ſeminary, like the goodly flowers in *Eden* under the warm, all-enlivening beam of heaven. And there are now amongſt us many perſons, great bleſſings both in the church and ſtate, as well as in more common life, who had the happineſs to receive their education immediately under him. In one word, I believe there is no perſon, however worthy, who would think his own merit impair'd, or his honor touch'd, if it ſhould be added, that

that conſidering his ſtation in the college, and the time he continued therein, that learned ſociety never enjoyed a greater bleſſing and ornament in any one man, than in Mr. SEWALL. And I can hardly think of him in this ſtation, without having my thoughts carried back to SAMUEL at Naioth, amongſt the ſons of the prophets, as one "appointed over them." ‡

While Mr. SEWALL was a reſident at the college, more eſpecially towards the latter part of the time, he applied himſelf to the ſtudy of the law, as much as he well could without neglecting the proper duties of his ſtation; in the diſcharge whereof he was ever diligent and faithful. This he did with a view to changing his manner of life, and betaking himſelf to the bar. And only to have mentioned his applying his mind in any meaſure to this ſtudy, is equivalent to ſaying, that he ſoon acquired a very conſiderable knowledge in the law. For his genius was ſo piercing, and his natural penetration at once ſo deep and quick, that no ſcience, however crabbed, intricate or involv'd, could long make oppoſition thereto In whatever he engaged, he became

‡ The author of this diſcourſe did not indeed enter into the college, till the year after Mr. *Sewall* left it: But nothing is ſaid above, but upon good authority.

came a conſiderable proficient therein, as it were at once: ſo ſurpriſingly quick was his apprehenſion of things; ſo clear his head; ſo acute and deep his diſcernment.

Being thus qualified, he was, in the year 1739, called from his collegiate, into an higher ſphere of life; viz. to take a ſeat on the bench of the ſuperiour court of judicature for the province. This was done without his making any intereſt for it.—And it was well for his country that many perſons, and amongſt them, gentlemen of authority and influence in the government, were acquainted with his great abilities and merit; to which he himſelf ever appeared more a ſtranger than any other perſon, who had any knowledge of him. And SAMUEL's being cloathed with a civil character, after being ſome time in other employments, is here brought to mind—

In this new ſtation he became more generally known, and therefore more generally eſteemed; as well as, perhaps, more extenſively uſeful. His wiſdom and integrity were ſo conſpicuous herein, and gave him ſuch an acknowledged pre-eminence, that on the death of the honorable and learned chief juſtice DUDLEY, he

he was, in 1752, appointed to ſucceed him in that important office; to the general ſatisfaction, and even joy of the province; altho' he was not the ſenior of the then worthy ſurviving judges.

This promotion, which was not only unſollicited, but even oppos'd by himſelf, without altering his mind or manners in the leaſt, ſtill enlarged the ſphere of his influence; that influence, which was ever uſeful juſt ſo far as it extended; being never employed, but in doing good, or preventing evil; which is in effect the ſame thing. He ſuſtained this high office with the reputation of great wiſdom, and of ſtrict fidelity. He alſo ſupported the dignity of it, by his conduct in it. For, tho' he was truly a moſt humble and modeſt man; yet he well knew what was due to his ſtation. Nor did he, by any means, want the reſolution to maintain, and to vindicate the honor of it, as occaſion required. He had indeed the quickeſt, as well as the exacteſt ſenſe, of true honor: And he diſcovered in this capicity, from firſt to laſt, that admirable ſpirit of government which was mentioned before on another occaſion. He preſerved a great decorum in the court: He moderat-

rated the debates with a becoming calmneſs and dignity, in conjunction with a ſtrict impartiality: Shewing himſelf at once the man of honor and ſpirit, the knowing lawyer, and the upright judge.

Altho' his reputation was great, even at his firſt coming upon the bench, it was daily growing till the time when heaven was pleaſed to take him from it. He was both "a terror to evil doers, and a praiſe to them that did well," in the adminiſtration of juſtice; in which he went from one part of the country to another, like a ſecond SAMUEL. And, where "his return was," we all know. Nor is there the leaſt reaſon to doubt, but that he might to the very laſt, have appealed to the whole province, as SAMUEL did to all Iſrael, boldly challenging them to witneſs any wrong, or unrighteouſneſs in him, in the very language of that good judge: —"Whom have "I defrauded? whom have I oppreſſed? "or of whoſe hand have I received any "bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?"— And had he done ſo, this whole people in general, unleſs they had been leſs grateful and juſt than the Iſraelites (who were not, however, very remarkable for thoſe virtues) would doubtleſs have anſwered as they did—

did— " Thou haſt not defrauded us, nor " oppreſſed us ; neither haſt thou taken " ought of any mans hand." Yea, it may be queſtion'd, whether ever any perſon amongſt us, was ſo impudent as to make an attempt upon his honor, by the offer of a bribe. For his heart was not only incapable of admitting the leaſt venality, or corruption of this ſort; but univerſally known to be ſo ; and more immutably fixed to the love of juſtice, than the needle to the pole : For even that varies and deviates ; and may, at any time, be ſhaken from its proper point to a contrary direction : While his juſtice appear'd as unmoveable as the " everlaſting hills ;" or rather, purſu'd its appointed courſe in his circuit, like the undeviating ſun in the firmament of heaven.—Juſtice muſt, however, be here underſtood, only in contradiſtinction to wrong, injury, or poſitive injuſtice ; and not, as it is ſome times, in oppoſition to mercy and compaſſion. For in criminal matters, I believe he always inclin'd to the ſide of clemency and mercy, where there was legal room for the exerciſe of them ; and whenever ſeverity was not apparently neceſſary for the common good, which he ſtill kept in view : Herein imitating the ſupreme governor of the world,

world, who does not "willingly," much leſs wantonly, afflict and grieve the children of men; but, either for their own profit, or for the preſervation of order, and public good; that others may "ſee and "fear, and not do ſo wickedly."

It muſt not be forgotten here, that ſoon after he was promoted to the important truſt of chief juſtice, he was elected a member of his Majeſty's council for the province; and continued to be ſo elected every year ſucceſſively to the laſt. He had indeed been in nomination for a ſeat at that honorable board ſeveral years before; and many worthy perſons were very preſſing and urgent in the affair. But he himſelf made oppoſition to it; and this, partly at leaſt, becauſe he doubted the expediency of his being at once a judge of the court, and at the council table; thinking that, hereby, he might be brought "into temptation and a ſnare;" or, in plain words, ſubject himſelf to ſome *undue influence*. This may be depended on as a certain fact. So extremely tender, ſo delicate was his conſcience; ſo nice his ſenſe of honor; and ſo great his diffidence of himſelf! He therefore utterly declined all propoſals of this ſort, and perſiſted therein,

therein, that he might keep himſelf as independent as poſſible. However, his friends, who knew him incapable of being unduly biaſs'd by any means or circumſtances whatever; and were ſatisfied, he would be very ſerviceable at the board, would not deſiſt: And he was accordingly elected a member of the council, againſt all the oppoſition he could well make. Nor was it without conſiderable difficulty, that he was finally prevailed upon to drop his objections, and to accept, after he was choſen.

Thus, like SAMUEL of old, after having been many years a judge, he became one of the king's council. And at that honorable board, as in every other capacity, he ſhew'd himſelf the wiſe and upright man: And not only ſo; for he was one of eminent diſtinction amongſt others of the ſame character. This was more eſpecially the ſphere in which his patriotiſm diſcover'd itſelf. For while he was ſtrictly loyal, and attached to the preſent royal family on revolution-principles (which were alſo the principles of SAMUEL;) while he was ſteady, on one hand, in aſſerting the rights of the crown, and of his Majeſty's governor; he was, on the other hand, a moſt zealous friend to his

country, its laws and liberties. If at any time things were in agitation, as they ſometimes were, which he apprehended inconſiſtent with, or hazardous to, the juſt rights and liberties of the people, or prejudicial to them in any other reſpect; he had always the integrity and magnanimity to oppoſe ſuch meaſures, whoever appear'd as the firſt promoters, or compliant fautors, of them. Nor did he fear to give his negative to the nominations to civil offices, whenever he conceived the perſons nominated, to be wholly unſuitable for, or unworthy of them. In one word, he uſed, "to the beſt of his judgment at "all times, freely to give his advice to "the governor, for the good management "of the public affairs of this govern-"ment."† This he ever gave in the integrity of his heart, without fear, favor, or criminal prejudice. And though it might be too much to ſay of any man, that he was never, in any reſpect, miſtaken in his judgment; yet there have probably been but few men in the world, leſs incident to ſuch miſtakes, than the honorable perſon of whom I am ſpeaking.

It

† The words of the oath taken by the members of his Majeſty's council for this province.

It ſhould be remember'd here, that, as a member of his Majeſty's council, he was one of the overſeers of the college: At which board he was eminently ſerviceable, by his ſuperior knowledge in literary matters; and by what experience had taught him concerning the beſt methods of inſtructing and governing that ſociety, while he was a tutor in it.

But, if you pleaſe, we will for the preſent take our leave of the excellent ſcholar, the accompliſh'd, upright judge, the wiſe and faithful counſellor, the loyal ſubject, and zealous patriot; provided we can, for a moment, ſeperate theſe ideas and characters from this extraordinary perſon; and conſider him only in his private capacity. And here we have preſented to our view, the moſt agreeable companion, the accompliſh'd gentleman, the warm, diſcrete and faithful friend, a good maſter and neighbour, a perſon of uncommon candor, and an exemplary chriſtian.

He was the moſt agreeable companion, and an accompliſh'd gentleman. He was the moſt remote from all appearances of vanity and affectation. He was of a very ſocial and courteous make; and his manner of

addreſs was particularly engaging. His converſation was often inſtructive, always ſprightly and entertaining; and indeed never failed to charm. He "honor'd all men;" treated every one with due reſpect, and never gave cauſe of offence or uneaſineſs to any, whether preſent or abſent, by words or actions: of which he was very ſingularly cautious. His behaviour was poliſh'd, his manners refin'd; and had in them that peculiar delicacy, which all can ſee and admire, but none can exactly deſcribe. His countenance, his whole air and mien, *ſtruck at once*, if I may ſo expreſs it; and attracted the eſteem and regard of the ſpectator, by telling even his eyes, what kind of ſoul informed the body which he ſaw before him: While he converſed with people, both of the loweſt and higheſt ranks, without the leaſt tincture of haughtineſs on one hand, or of meanneſs on the other.

He was a warm, diſcrete and faithful friend. He could never be prevailed on to diſcard, or even to neglect, any one, for whom he had profeſſed a regard, on mere ſuſpicion, or rumours; or without examining things to the bottom. Nor was he backward to adviſe on occaſion, eſpecially

ly when his advice was aſked; for otherwiſe he was far from being forward or officious. Nor indeed do I doubt, but that he was as willing to hear, as to give advice, tho' no man leſs needed it; he being a kind of oracle to himſelf, tho' leſs ſo than he was to others. He was extremely kind and obliging in his temper; and, in ſhort, diſcharged all the offices of friendſhip in general with the utmoſt punctuality, and the moſt nice preciſion.—It were needleſs, after ſaying thus much of him in the capacity of a friend, to ſay any thing of him as a relation; only, that if any ſhould imagine he was not the very beſt and kindeſt, it would be a proof that they knew but little of him——

He was a good maſter; no ways moroſe or auſtere; but as kind and indulgent as was conſiſtent even with the good of his ſervants; not to ſay, with the duty and ſervice which they owed to him; which were ſuperfluous in ſpeaking of ſo reaſonable and juſt a man. He treated all his domeſtics in a proper manner; who muſt indeed have been very bad ones, had they not thought themſelves happy in ſuch a maſter, as they doubtleſs did.

He was the beſt of neighbours; ever courteous and obliging. None of thoſe who liv'd near him, could help looking on it as a part of their felicity, that they were in the neighbourhood of ſuch a perſon, even though they had no particular knowledge of him: While thoſe who knew him better, had proportionably an higher ſenſe of their happineſs in this reſpect.

He was a perſon of uncommon candor. He did not only, not allow himſelf to detract from the merit of any perſons of real worth; but would not ſpeak contemptuouſly, or reproachfully, of the capacity, the accompliſhments, or the behaviour of others, however juſt a foundation there might be for it. He apparently took a pleaſure in thinking and ſpeaking well of all worthy perſons; and often found ſomething to commend even in thoſe, in whom others could find nothing deſerving commendation. But if there were any, the ſubject of converſation, in whom he could find nothing praiſe-worthy, he would at leaſt be their apologiſt; ſtriving to extenuate their faults by ſome means or other, while others could hardly think of any thing but what ſeemed to be an aggravation of them. This was really his temper and diſpoſition.

And

And this brings me to what all truly wiſe and good men will acknowledge to be the beſt part of his character:—He was an exemplary CHRISTIAN. This, indeed, is implied in what was ſaid before, concerning the great regard which he all along manifeſted to religion and virtue, while a ſtudent, and tutor at the college; while a preacher of the goſpel; and by his ſtrict fidelity both as a judge, and as a counſellor. But it ſeemed proper to ſpeak more particular of his religion here, where we are conſidering him in his private capacity.—He appeared to have an habitual and deep reverence of almighty GOD upon his mind. And I have more than once heard him ſpeak with great pleaſure of that circumſtance in the character of Sir MATTHEW HALE, chief juſtice of the king's bench; That he was never known to mention the holy and venerable name of GOD—without making a pauſe at it in his diſcourſe.† He was a firm believer in JESUS CHRIST, the ſon of GOD; and in that religion which bears his name, as contained in the holy ſcriptures.

He was none of thoſe who are too wiſe to be taught of God; too great to worſhip

† The ſame is ſaid of Sir *I. Newton.*

ſhip and bow down before him, or too good and gracious to need the means of grace. He conſtantly attended (as you, my brethren of this ſociety, are witneſſes) He conſtantly attended the worſhip of God, and the ordinances of the goſpel, with great reverence, gravity and devotion: Which, tho' he was an enemy to oſtentation in every thing, and eſpecially in religion, were ſometimes ſo apparent in his countenance, that one could not obſerve it without having his own devotion raiſed and improved, if he had any: and hardly, if he had none before, without catching thereby ſomething of the ſame ſpirit from him. And as he was exemplary in his attendance upon the public worſhip of God, I have ſome particular reaſons to aſſure myſelf, that he alſo worſhiped God in his family; having as it were, like SAMUEL, an altar at his own houſe,* on which to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices to the Lord: Tho' I have indeed never made it my buſineſs to "creep into houſes;" or to pry curiouſly into peoples domeſtic concerns, like the heathen prieſts of old. ‡

He

* See as above 1 Sam. VII. 17.

‡ Scire volunt ſecreta domûs, atque inde timeri. Perſ.

He was a firm and zealous friend to the principles of religious liberty, and the ſacred rights of conſcience. No man was more free from all ſuperſtition, or from the ſordid, illiberal ſpirit of party. No man was more catholic towards chriſtians of different denominations; or farther from a ſpirit of bigotry, contention and cenſoriouſneſs. It was before obſerved, that he was a firm believer of the chriſtian religion in general; and he was ſo in particular, of the atonement made by the death of CHRIST for the ſins of the world; and of that "life and immortality, brought to "light by him thro' the goſpel;" in which he expreſſed an humble hope, in my hearing, a few hours before he expired.

He appear'd to have a great concern for the intereſt of chriſtianity in the world. And, by repeated converſations with him on the ſubject, I know he had very much at heart the coming into ſome ſcheme, or method, for propagating the goſpel amongſt the natives of theſe northern parts of *America*: Often expreſſing his great ſorrow that a certain SOCIETY beyond ſea, had done nothing, or but very little, to this important end; important, not only in a religious view of things, but ſecondarily, in a civil and political.

But

But not to digreſs: His whole life in general was apparently conducted under the influence, and according to the precepts, of our holy religion: Which is the moſt authentic evidence, at leaſt to others, of a perſon's being a thorough chriſtian. For men do not "gather grapes of thorns, "or figs of thiſtles;" and "by their fruits "we are to know them." But if there was any one virtue more conſpicuous in this good man, than another, it ſeems to have been the charity and bountifulneſs of his heart. And, "by this ſhall all men "know that ye are my diſciples," ſays our Lord, "if ye have love one to ano-"ther." A more ſoft and tender, a more ſympathizing, or more bountiful heart, no man, perhaps, ever had. He appeared, in reality, to "love his neighbour as himſelf." His heart ſeemed, not only always open, but expanded wide; even wider than the earth, and "broader than the ſea." And had his fortune been of the ſame dimenſions with his ſoul, he would have been the common, public almoner, even without being appointed by any, under God, to the diſcharge of that office; diſtributing, not only to the neceſſities of the ſaints, but to every proper object of charity, far and near. Great riches

in

in his hands would indeed have been a common bleſſing; and, by being thus diſperſed abroad, and "given to the poor," like incenſe continually aſcending to heaven: And we know, that "with ſuch "ſacrifices God is well pleaſed."

That this would have been his manner of employing riches, is ſufficiently evident by the uſe he made of what he had. For tho' his income was very moderate, or, to ſpeak more properly, quite ſcanty; and ſuch as almoſt any other perſon in his ſtation, would have thought inſufficient for his own ſupport in a manner ſuitable to it, even with the beſt œconomy; yet it is well known, that of that ſmall income he ſpent a large proportion in deeds of charity and beneficence, from time to time. Often did the bleſſing of the poor, and of him that was ready to periſh, come upon him. Even in his narrow circumſtances, he was like Job in the days of his proſperity, "eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame." And how often has he cauſed the "widow's heart to ſing for joy!"

Let me here juſt mention one thing more, which amongſt innumerable others, plainly ſhew'd the goodneſs of his heart.

In

In the exercise of his office as chief justice, he had repeated occasions to pronounce sentence of death upon malefactors. In doing which, tho' he did not forget, or lose, the firmness becoming a judge; yet he always did it with such a visible concern for the unhappy criminal, join'd with such moving, pathetic counsels and admonitions, as hardly ever failed to force sighs, and draw tears, from almost every person present.

But there is not time to be more particular on the character of this excellent and amiable man. These are the outlines of it, truly, tho' very imperfectly drawn. To sum up all in a few words: Altho' I have known some very savage and brutal persons; some very ignorant and stupid, and some very wicked and abandon'd ones; yet I never knew one so savage and brutal, as not to be charm'd, as it were, with the polish'd manners of judge SEWALL; so ignorant and stupid, as not to see and acknowledge him to have been a wise man; or so wicked and abandon'd, as not to revere him as a good one; for I know a bad man cannot really love a good one, as such. And the better title any had themselves, to these characters of polish'd, wise and good,

good, the more ready, proportionably, they always were to give *him* the praiſe of them. Some other perſons of great abilities and merit, in different parts of the world, have not been generally eſteem'd and belov'd, becauſe people did not know their true characters; and had conceived ſome unreaſonable prejudices againſt them. But it was his felicity, or rather his country's, that he was known, and therefore eſteemed from the firſt, and ſtill more at the laſt; ſo that the public had the benefit of his ſuperiour talents. Many others in ſuch eminent ſtations as his, have had ſome to envy, and ſpeak evil of them, to the leſſening of their uſefulneſs. But it was his, and his country's felicity, that his abilities and virtues were at leaſt as conſpicuous as his ſtation: So as to exempt him from envy and detraction, and to make the ſphere of his influence very extenſive.

Some, however, will perhaps curiouſly inquire, "Whether this man had no faults?"—If he had any, habitual to him, they were very *uncommon* ones for this age of the world; for they conſiſted in the *exceſs* of theſe two virtues, *liberality* and *ſelf-diffidence!* And if, by the former, he ſeemed

to

to injure himself; yet at the same time he resembled the poor widow in the gospel, who "of her penury cast in unto the of-"ferings of God, all the living which "she had:" being commended by HIM who taught, that "it is more blessed to "give than to receive;" and who, "altho' "he were rich, yet for our sakes became "poor."—By the latter of them, he may indeed have done a negative injury to others. For had he had this quality of self-diffidence in a less degree, he might, possibly, have been more of a *leader* than he seems to have been, in the affairs of the public; from which, some additional advantages would probably have accrued to it.—But how many persons, at least in *other governments*, have done almost irreparable damage to the public, on the other hand, by their excess of rashness, self-conceit and officiousness; by their presumption, and driving, as it were, all before them?—If *that* may be call'd a *fault* in him, which yet admits of some doubt; *this* is, without any doubt, a *crime* in them; and will not so readily be excused. But amongst all the various woes denounced against different persons in scripture, there seems to be none which so much concerned

cerned him, as that pointed againſt thoſe, of whom every one ſpeaketh well. †

It appears, I ſuppoſe, not to have been wholly without reaſon, that SAMUEL's conduct and character were pitched on by way of introduction to the character and conduct of that diſtinguiſh'd and eminent perſon, of whom I have been ſpeaking. For, was the former a fearer and ſervant of God even from his early youth? We have reaſon to think the latter was ſo likewiſe. Was the former brought up in the ſchool of the ſons of the prophets? So, in effect, was the latter. Did the former, even in his youth, bid fair in due time to become a ſignal bleſſing to his country? So did the latter. Did the former miniſter before the Lord and his people in the ſacred offices of religion? So did the latter. Did the former become in time, an inſtructor and governor in that college wherein he had received his education, and prove a great bleſſing to it? So did the latter. Was the former at length cloathed with the important office of a judge? So was the latter. Did the former travel from place to place in the diſcharge of this laborious truſt? So did the latter. Did the former worſhip the Lord

† Luke VI. 26.

Lord in his own houſe, as well as in public? So did the latter. Did the people "fear the LORD and Samuel?" But many of thoſe who did not fear the Lord, yet feared the latter, who was a terror to their evil works. Was the former eminently faithful and upright, in the exerciſe of his authority? So was the latter. Was the former at length one of the king's council? So was the latter. Was the former a true patriot; a lover of his country, its laws and liberties; and an enemy to all tyranny and tyrants? So was the latter. Was the former in all reſpects a worthy, good and amiable perſon? So was the latter. Were the great merits, and public ſervices of the former, acknowledged by all the people in general? So were thoſe of the latter. Did the former continue all the days of his life in the faithful diſcharge of his important truſt? So did the latter. Was the former juſtly and univerſally lamented at his death? So is the latter—

Thus far the parallel ſeems to hold in general, without uſing any unnatural violence; tho' it will not do ſo in ſome other reſpects. SAMUEL, for example, had children, who gave him trouble by their

their ill behaviour ; but the other had none. And yet how many perſons have in him loſt a father! while he has obtained a "name better than that of ſons or of daughters"; far better indeed, than that of ſuch as ſome of SAMUEL's §.

SAMUEL was, moreover, a prophet of the Lord, being immediately inſpired by him. Such was not the latter. But yet he ſaw, heard and believed thoſe things, of which many prophets and righteous men, and kings in thoſe remote ages, underſtood but little at moſt. And indeed the father of ſpirits gave him ſuch a genius as, I had almoſt ſaid, might ſupply the place of inſpiration! But this would be extravagant.—However, his great knowledge can hardly be ſaid to have been acquired by little and little, in the ordinary way, and by much pains: It was rather a kind of immediate intuition; ſuch as we may ſuppoſe in ſome beings of an higher order. It was ſo quick, clear and piercing, that, like the lightning, it extended in a moment to all parts under heaven, the origin and ſource of both.

But there is another thing, wherein the parallel fails: For SAMUEL lived till he

§ Judge SEWALL died a Bachelor.

was far advanced in years; and died in old age, when, as we may naturally ſuppoſe, the common infirmities of it had render'd him almoſt incapable of ſerving the public any longer—But the other, alas! died at an age, * when he might probably have been a great public bleſſing for many years longer, had heaven ſpar'd him to us—However, in what does honorable old age conſiſt? Does it "ſtand in "length of time?" or is it only "meaſured by number of years?" Does it not rather conſiſt in piety, virtue, and doing many and great public ſervices? In ſhort, is not "wiſdom the gray hair un-"to men; and an unſpotted life, old age?" If we meaſure the life of that excellent man, whoſe death we now mourn, by this ſtandard (which we find in the *Wiſdom of Solomon;*) tho' we cannot ſay, perhaps, that he lived ſo long as SAMUEL, yet we may juſtly ſay, that but few perſons have lived ſo long in the world as he, at leaſt in this country; or died in ſuch "a good "old age."

However, we juſtly lament him dead; becauſe, had his life been preſerved, he might have probably continued a great public bleſſing many years longer. And the

* Ætat. 58.

the manner in which his funeral rites were attended the laſt evening, is a ſufficient proof that what has been ſaid of him, is, in general, the ſenſe of the public—But the will of heaven is done; and "ſhall "not the JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH "do right!"

If he who has been "faithful over a "few things, is to be made ruler over "many things," how highly muſt we ſuppoſe this eminently faithful ſervant of God, will be exalted, entering into the joy of his Lord at the laſt day? Yea rather, how happy? how highly exalted, may we ſuppoſe him to be already? All that was mortal of him (an inconſiderable part) is indeed repoſited in the tomb, not to ariſe till the heavens ſhall be no more. But his righteouſneſs ſhall endure, when they are "folded up and changed!" Methinks I ſaw him, when the law of death was once ſatisfied in him, convoy'd by thoſe "miniſtring ſpirits, who are ſent forth to miniſter to the heirs of ſalvation", to the paradiſe of God; himſelf no more a frail man, but an angel; a bright, glorious and immortal ſpirit, even "as a flame of fire"! And this, without any great change IN HIM. There was little more

needed, than to ſet SUCH a ſoul at liberty from it's incumbrance and priſon, the body.

Hail then, *Immortal Spirit*! (whether man or angel, the difference is not great) *Immortal Spirit*, hail! No longer incumber'd with mortality, or confin'd to earth and darkneſs: But introduced among the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; to the innumerable company of angels; to the general aſſembly, and church of the firſt-born in heaven; to Jeſus the mediator of the new covenant, and to God the judge of all! In his light to ſee light, and to drink joy and immortality, not at the ſhallow ſtreams, but at the fathomleſs fountain thereof!— And thou, Precious duſt! or lifeleſs body, ſoon to become duſt, "reſt "thou in hope"! For even thou ſhalt in due time hear the voice of the Son of God, and live; "faſhioned like unto his "own glorious body:" When, at furtheſt, ALL they that have died in the Lord, ſhall alſo be "equal unto the angels; and ſhall "be the children of God, being the chil-"dren of the RESURRECTION!*."

They who had no very particular knowledge of judge SEWALL, may perhaps ſuſpect that I have ſpoken of him in a ſtyle

* Luke XX. 36.

ſtyle extravagantly hyperbolical. But I am in no pain leſt others, who had the happineſs of a thorough acquaintance with him, ſhould think me chargeable with this. The memory of ſuch eminently wiſe, juſt and good men, ought indeed to be bleſſed; not in the frigid language of indifference, but in all that ardor of expreſſion, which naturally flows from an heart truly ſenſible of their worth, and deeply touched by their loſs. And it ſeems but equitable and congruous, that HE, who never ſpoke evil of any one, but honour'd all men, and delighted in giving all their due ſhare of praiſe; ſhould, at leaſt when he is dead and gone, be praiſed by all in his turn; and ſo much the rather, becauſe he would not willingly ſuffer any one to commend him while living; which was the truth as to this excellent perſon.

THE aſſembly has been detained ſo long already, that I muſt be much more brief than I intended in thoſe reflections, with which this diſcourſe is now to be cloſed.

We may juſtly conſider the death of this truly worthy perſon, as a common, public loſs; and a great frown of divine providence

providence upon the whole province. The loſs of ſuch a perſon in ſuch a ſtation, is doubtleſs a *public calamity* ; and great, in proportion to the extenſiveneſs of the bleſſing once enjoyed in him ; who was ſuch a friend to learning and religion ; ſuch a lover of his country, it's liberties and laws ; who ſcattered the wicked with his eye ; who ſtopped the mouth of iniquity ; and, under God, cauſed judgment to flow down as a river. In ſhort, in what one perſon among us, could the republic of letters, the law, the courts of juſtice, the common-wealth, the church of God, have ſuſtained a greater loſs † ? Nor are we, I hope, ſo degenerate as the people of Iſrael were, at the time when it was ſaid, —" The righteous dieth, and no man " layeth it to heart." No ! we all in general lay to heart the death of this one righteous man, at leaſt. And it may be queſtioned, whether ever a perſon died among us, before him, at once more univerſally, and more ſincerely, lamented. There is not, I believe, an heart but what feels this loſs in ſome degree : For, indeed, that man who is wholly inſenſible of it, if there be ſuch an one, cannot be ſaid to have any *heart* at all ; at leaſt not an " heart of fleſh, "

† Perſons of a *ſuperior rank* ought always to be ſuppoſed excepted, when this manner of expreſſion is uſed.

ſleſh", but only an "heart of ſtone", or of iron; an heart inſenſible to every thing worthy, great and good.

But we ought not only to conſider the loſs it ſelf; we ſhould, as was intimated before, conſider the holy hand and providence of God therein. God, by the prophet Iſaiah, amongſt ſome other ſore calamities which he brought, or threatned to bring, on his people of old for their ſins, ſpeaks of taking away ſuch eminent perſons; and leaving their places to be filled up by thoſe who are wholly unequal to them: "Ceaſe ye from man whoſe breath "is in his noſtrils: for wherein is he to "be accounted of? For behold, the Lord, "the Lord of hoſts, doth take away from "Jeruſalem and from Judah— the judge, "and the prophet, and the prudent — "the honourable man, and the counſel-"lor — and the eloquent orator. And I "will give children to be their princes, "and babes ſhall rule over them *." We have now before us a very ſtriking example of the judgment expreſſed in the former part of this paſſage. God, of his great goodneſs, grant that the latter part thereof may never be verified in Us! May He in mercy return to us, and heal the breach which

* Iſai. II. 22.

which his hand has made: For with him is "the reſidue of the ſpirit;" the ſpirit of wiſdom and prudence, of juſtice and judgment, and of a ſound mind. Our ſuitably conſidering his holy providence in this grievous viſitation of it, may be a means of conciliating his favour. And if gracious heaven ſhall pleaſe hereafter to give us ſuch judges and counſellors *as the laſt* deceaſed, I think we need not pray for ſuch as were *at the firſt*: Which is ſaid, however, without the leaſt intention to reflect on the memory of any of the worthy fathers of this country.

There are, to be ſure, but very few perſons, equally qualified in all reſpects to fill that important ſtation, which is now left vacant by the death of judge SEWALL. Nor will ſaying this, I am perſwaded, give the leaſt offence to any; particularly, not to the honorable, and very worthy SURVIVING judges of that bench, who have all along manifeſted the greateſt regard for their dear brother deceaſed; who are amongſt the ſincereſt mourners for him; and who are now paying a public honor to his memory, by their preſence here, on this occaſion. THEY will doubtleſs be excited, by this diſpenſation of providence,

to

to great fidelity in the discharge of their important trust; pursuing the steps of their departed brother with zeal and vigor: Being thus reminded of their own mortality, and of an HIGHER TRIBUNAL, to which all who are judged here below, have a right of appeal; and the judgment of which will be DECISIVE!

The college, as well as the general assembly, and the superior court of judicature for the province, is particularly concerned in this visitation of divine providence; considering how long the Deceased was a great blessing and ornament to it, while he resided therein; the great concern which he always manifested since, for the interest of learning and religion there; and his great abilities, and equal zeal to serve it, in the capacity of one of its overseers.

The relatives of the Deceased, those of them that are present, will allow me to exhort them while they sorrow, not to "sorrow as those that have no hope:"—And also, while they mourn the Dead, to live as he lived; in expectation of a joyful meeting with him another day; when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence

preſence of the Lord. " For if we be-
" lieve that Jeſus died, and roſe again,
" even ſo them alſo that ſleep in Jeſus
" will God bring with him." In which thrice glorious day, *that* will be in a meaſure applicable to each one of Chriſt's faithful followers, which he once ſpake of himſelf, and indeed ſtill ſpeaketh to us all from heaven :— " I am HE that
" liveth, and was dead ; and behold I am
" ALIVE FOREVERMORE, Amen"! *

We, my brethren of this aſſembly, have ſome particular reaſons to lay the death of this excellent man to heart ; and to attend to the voice of providence therein. He, for many years, came up to this houſe of the Lord in company with us, to worſhip at his footſtool. We have in him loſt, not only an hearty friend to this ſociety ; but a wiſe and prudent adviſer on all occaſions, a principal ornament and pillar of it. But you will remember that a " pillar," and the " foundation," the " head of the cor-
" ner," or " chief corner-ſtone," are not the ſame thing, or of equal importance to a building ; whether a material or " ſpiri-
" tual houſe." The former mentioned, tho' indeed a noble " pillar," while it ſtood erect, was yet a decaying one : It

is

* Rev. I. 18.

is now, alas! fallen quite down, ſoon to moulder away, and be reduced to powder and duſt; ſo as never to afford us any farther ſupport! But the "foundation," the "head of the corner," ſtill remains unſhaken, unimpaired, an ever "living ſtone," able to bear up the whole building. For WE, I truſt, were not built, neither did, or do we depend, for our main ſupport, on any mortal man. We were built on a broad and firm foundation; even "on the foundation of the prophets "and apoſtles, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF "being the chief corner-ſtone:" To whom coming as unto a living ſtone, diſallowed indeed of men, but choſen of God and precious, we alſo as lively ſtones ſhall be built up in HIM, a ſpiritual houſe, an holy temple in the Lord, for an habitation of God thro' the ſpirit; that we may offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt. And, I truſt, "the gates of hell ſhall never prevail a-"gainſt us:" For other foundation [or better] can no man lay!

Let us therefore, my beloved brethren, take encouragement to ourſelves under this bereaving ſtroke of divine providence; and "ſtand faſt in the Lord." Let us neither deſpiſe this chaſtening of the Lord, nor

nor yet faint, being thus rebuked of him. Let us not deſpond; let us not be weary or faint in our minds, while we look unto Jeſus, the AUTHOR and FINISHER of OUR FAITH; whom "God hath made "head over all things to the church." And let us live in the obſervance of all his commandments: For, as you well know, he compares thoſe that hear his ſayings, and do them not, to a fooliſh man that "buildeth his houſe upon the ſand;" which will fall at laſt, and great will be its fall! But thoſe that hear and do them, he likens, on the contrary, to a wiſe man that "buildeth his houſe upon a rock;" which defies all rains, and winds, and ſtorms, and floods, from whatever quarter they come, and ſhall never fall; "for "it is founded upon a rock:" And, to apply the words of the apoſtle, ſpoken with particular reference to another point —"That rock is CHRIST."

To conclude: While I was ſpeaking ſo particularly above, of the character and virtues of that good man, whoſe loſs we all deplore, I conſidered myſelf, not merely as paying a ſmall part of that tribute and honor which are juſtly due to his memory; but as reminding you, my brethren,

thren, and this whole aſſembly, of your duty; thinking you would, of courſe, be excited to imitate the virtues which were ſo conſpicuous in him. For you will remember, that altho' we are not all judges, or counſellors, and do not act in the ſame ſpheres of life that he did; yet we are all bound, in our own, to practiſe the very ſame virtues, which he did in his; the ſame piety towards God, by a due regard to his houſe and worſhip, and in other reſpects; the ſame juſtice, beneficence and charity towards man; the ſame humility and courteſy; the ſame condeſcenſion and goodneſs to all. For though our bleſſed Lord is our primary, and great, and moſt perfect example; yet we are admoniſhed to follow others alſo, wherein they followed him; and to be followers of all them, who thro' faith and patience inherit the promiſes. This good man is taken away; poſſibly from the evil to come on us who ſurvive: We know not. But certainly the warning voice of this providence to us all, is, "Be ye alſo ready:"—"Boaſt "not yourſelves of to-morrow; for ye "know not what a day may bring forth." —If we truly fear God, and ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs, as this good man did, his late departure from us will not prove a *final* adieu! We ſhall ſee him again; not indeed

deed in this ſtate of darkneſs, affliction and trial; but we ſhall be preſented together with him before the preſence of God with exceeding joy, and with crowns of glory from his hand. But as there is "one "glory of the ſun, another glory of the "moon, and another glory of the ſtars;" and as even "one ſtar differeth from ano-"ther ſtar in glory: So alſo is the reſur-"rection of the dead."—When therefore God himſelf, who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all, ſhall ſhine on all the bleſſed in heaven, we may well ſuppoſe that his ſervant lately deceaſed, will appear with a diſtinguiſhed luſtre and glory; even tho' all "the righteous ſhall "ſhine forth as the ſun in the kingdom "of their Father."

Now unto HIM, the GOD, the JUDGE, the FATHER OF ALL, who only hath immortality; dwelling in light that mortal men cannot approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, or can ſee, and live; of whom, and thro' whom, and to whom are all things:—Even unto HIM be given all glory and honor, dominion, and bleſſing, and praiſe, thro' JESUS CHRIST our Lord, AMEN!